

REMARKS

At the outset, the Examiner is thanked for the review and consideration of the present application. The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw the rejection(s) in view of the remarks contained herein.

35 U.S.C. § 103 Rejections

The Examiner rejected Claims 1 and 4 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over the prior art admitted by the Applicant (hereinafter PA) in view of Gopikanth (US 6,799,038). The Applicant respectfully traverses the rejections based on the reasons provided below.

Gopikanth discloses that a mobile station initially determines if it can use its home PLMN, and if this home PLMN is available, the mobile station will attempt to contact its home PLMN. If the home PLMN is unavailable, then the mobile station will compile other available networks based on strength of the signals from these networks (see Gopikanth, column 7 lines 24-33). The Examiner asserted in the Office Action that “home PLMN is available” means that the pilot signal from at least one base station from the home PLMN exceeds a predetermined threshold level in signal strength and therefore the home PLMN is included in the active set. However, after carefully scrutinizing the citation of Gopikanth, Applicant submits that the Examiner has misinterpreted the reference.

As illustrated in column 1, lines 15-19 and column 7, lines 24-26 of Gopikanth, “the home PLMN is known by matching the mobile country code (MMC) and the mobile network code (MNC) of the home PLMN with the MCC and MNC of the International Mobile Station Identifier (IMSI)” and “the mobile station may initially determine if it can use its home PLMN by matching MCCs and MNCs.” In other words, Gopikanth determines whether the home

PLMN is available by matching some codes, without considering the signal strength. Therefore, the home PLMN is available as long as the codes (MCCs and MNCs) are matched.

The Examiner also pointed out that "the list contains only those PLMNs that offer sufficient signal strength" and "the PLMNs are listed in order based on the received signal strength" (see Gopikanth, column 7, line 35). However, those PLMNs with sufficient signal strength are not "home PLMN" but "visited PLMNs." The "visited PLMNs" are generated when the home PLMN is unavailable, i.e. the codes are not matched (see Gopikanth, column 7, lines 31-35). In column 1, lines 19-21, Gopikanth has clearly defined the "visited PLMN" as a different PLMN used by the mobile station when the home PLMN is unable to be initiated. Therefore, the "active set" is created after the "home PLMN" is unavailable, and is composed of the "visited PLMNs" with sufficient signal strength. In other words, Gopikanth discloses a method of selecting a home PLMN if any home PLMN has been detected regardless of the strength of the home PLMN, and selecting from other networks (PLMN) if no home PLMN has been detected, which provides the same method as the prior art (PA) illustrated in the present specification.

However, one of the features of the present invention as recited in Claim 1 lies in a step of selecting a reliable RPLMN (i.e. a reliable home PLMN) rather than an available RPLMN by determining the signal strength transmitted from the RPLMN (step (b)). Even though the RPLMN is detected (step (a)), the mobile device may skip this RPLMN and seek for other available networks if the RPLMN is not reliable, i.e. the signal strength transmitted from the RPLMN is not high enough (step (b)). In contrast, according to Gopikanth, the mobile station initially determines if it can use its home PLMN by matching codes, and if the codes are matched, the mobile station will attempt to contact the home PLMN regardless of the signal strength. Accordingly, no combination of PA and Gopikanth teach or disclose "determining if the RPLMN

is detected” and if yes, “determining if a signal strength transmitted from the RPLMN is higher than a particular level.” Applicant, therefore, requests withdrawal of this rejection.

Claims 2-3 and 5-7 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over PA in view of Gopikanth and in further view of Blakeney, et al. (US 5,267,261). Applicant traverses this rejection.

No combination of PA and Gopikanth suggests each and every element of Claim 1 or Claim 5 from which Claims 2-3 and 6-7 respectively depend. The addition of Blakeney does not cure this deficiency. Specifically, no combination of PA, Gopikanth, and Blakeney teaches or suggests “determining if the RPLMN is detected” and if yes, “determining if a signal strength transmitted from the RPLMN is higher than a particular level” as set forth in Claims 1 and 5.

Therefore, the Applicant respectfully submits that neither PA nor Gopikanth, considered alone or in combination with Blakeney, produces the effects and advantages of the present invention for both lacking the step of determining the signal strength transmitted from the RPLMN (or home PLMN) before adopting this RPLMN (or home PLMN) to communicate with.

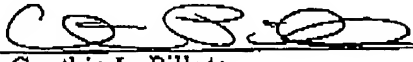
The Applicant respectfully submits that independent Claims 1 and 5 are thus allowable over the cited art. In addition, Claims 2-4 and 6-7, which directly or indirectly depend on patentable Claims 1 and 5 and further limit the scope, are believed also to be patentable.

CONCLUSION

In light of the above remarks, the Applicant respectfully submits that all the pending Claims are in condition for allowance, and respectfully request the withdrawal of the rejections. Accordingly, a Notice of Allowance is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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